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PROFESSOR ALLEGEDLY BOUGHT COMPUTER PARTS FOR VIETNAM
FULLERTON, CA

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A physics professor whose friends call him a "peacemaker" and claim he was murdered by a right-wing Vietnamese death squad bought computer parts for Communist Vietnam and financed foreign travel for a convicted atomic-secrets spy, the Orange County Register reported.

Edward Lee Cooperman, 48, was shot to death Oct. 13 in his office at California State University, Fullerton.

Minh Van Lam, 20, a Vietnamese refugee and friend of Cooperman's, awaits trial in the killing. His lawyer, Alan May, denies any political undertones.

But Cooperman's activities as an anti-war activist and scientist interested in the rebuilding of Vietnam often carried him far from home and the campus where he was known for befriending Asian students.

Cooperman was under investigation by the U.S. Commerce Department's Office of Export Enforcement for shipping scientific equipment and computer components to Vietnam, the Register said Sunday.

The CIA, FBI and Customs Service were also looking into his trips and the equipment he shipped to Southeast Asia, the newspaper said.

Cooperman's records showed he funneled money through UNESCO, a United Nations subsidiary criticized as a front for Soviet espionage by Sen. Daniel Moynihan, D-New York, and the Foundation for Scientific Cooperation with Vietnam, a non-profit venture Cooperman ran from his campus office.

In the past three years, Cooperman received at least \$575,000 from UNESCO and wrote checks for almost \$1.5 million through the foundation to himself, political associates, colleagues, friends and suppliers of scientific and medical equipment, the Register said.

Among the payments made -- mainly for equipment for scientific projects in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam and to pay Vietnamese to travel to the United States and Soviet Union -- were more than \$15,000 in checks to Morton Sobell.

Sobell was convicted in 1951 and imprisoned 18 years for conspiracy to commit espionage with Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were executed for their roles in supplying the secret of the atomic bomb to the Soviets.

Close friends like former Pentagon Papers defendant Anthony Russo recently formed an international committee to focus attention on Cooperman's death, which local police have said was not politically motivated.

Russo and others hope to prove Cooperman was killed by a right-wing Vietnamese death squad.